



OPERATION RECOGNITION~

Effective May 16, 2012 this program has been reinstated by The New York State Education Department. This program offers Veterans (or next of kin) of WWII, Korean Conflict or Vietnam War the opportunity to receive a high school diploma without a fee. Eligible candidates should submit evidence of military service to any New York State school in exchange for the issuance of such diploma. Candidates **do not** need to show evidence of attendance at a school in New York State but rather **affirm** in writing that they do not possess a high school diploma and are residents of New York State.

VA Medical Hardship Enrollment~

If you have previously been denied VA Medical because of income, it may be possible to reapply through a Hardship Enrollment. **Examples of possible hardships are:**
Terminally ill
Bankruptcy
Loss of income (Veteran or spouse laid-off)

VA Dependency Status~

VA Compensation – Once again I am finding that Veterans are not reading their award letters. If a Veteran is 0 - 20% service-connected (**no dependency allowance is afforded**), But then files for additional disabilities or an increase to an existing disability and the VA awards this claim at a rate of 30% or more (**dependency allowance is afforded**).

However, the award letter clearly states "We are paying you as a single veteran". At this point, you should make an appointment immediately with your local service organization representative to fill out **VA Form 21-686c (with supporting documents i.e. marriage certificate, birth certificate, adoption papers) Declaration of Status of Dependents**.

This also works in reverse and usually not in the Veterans favor. If the Veteran were to divorce, a child turns 18 years old (or 23 if a full time student in college) or if a dependent passes away. **THE VA MUST BE NOTIFIED!** One of these family status changes may affect your VA compensation in decreasing dependency pay out allowance and if left unattended it could put the Veteran in an overpayment.

VA Pension – Is an income based program so if the Veteran is married and then becomes divorced, this benefit needs to be adjusted and vice versa. This general rule also applies to **VA Medical** as it has similar income criteria in certain instances.

When in doubt call your local service organization representative!

Summer is officially here and I hope to see you all at some point through the season at one of your post events. Enjoy! Be safe & God Bless